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AN ORATION MADE AT THE *HAGE*, BEFORE THE Prince of ORENGE, and the *Assembly of the High and Mighty Lords*, the STATES Generall of the Vnited Prouinces:

By the Reuerend Father in God, the Lord Bishop of *Landaff*, one of the Commissioners sent by the *Kings most Excellent Maiesty* to the Synod of *Dort*.

LONDON,
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MOST ILLVSTRIOVS and Noble Lords.

MOST EXCELLENT PRINCE.

OVR Lord and King IESVS CHRIST, when hee was now about to go vnto his Father, and desirous to leaue vnto those whom he loued, some excellent benefit, (a benefit then which the earth cannot yeeld a greater,) hee left them Peace: Peace at his death as a Legacy, he bequeathed them: *My Peace* (saith he) *I leaue vnto you, my Peace I giue vnto you*; for neither

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could men wish from heauen a greater blessing, neither could the Angels declare vnto men from heauen a more welcome message, then *Glory in heauen, and Peace in earth.*

This Bond, by which heauen vnto earth, and earth vnto heauen reciprocally is vnited, hath so straitly bound the heart of the Kings Maiesty of great Brittaine; that according to the exceeding care which he hath euermore had of the safe-guard and defence of true Religion, of settling Peace and Concord amongst Christian Princes throughout the world; but especially, Most Illustrious, Noble, and Magnificent Lords, of procuring the good and tranquillity of this your State, to which he acknowledges his Kingdom to bee linkt by the Tye of an ancienter and straiter League: Hee hath sent vs hither with this especiall charge, that as much as in vs lyes, we procure your prosperity, and your Churches Peace.

Certainly, an exceeding desire of Peace & the publique good, possest his Princely heart,

heart, when hee commended vnto your Lordſhips the care of Religion.

This his Maieſties prouident care can neuer bee vnwelcome, if it may pleaſe your Lordſhips, according to your Wiſedome and Piety, to recount the benefit of the reformed Religion, and the bleſſings of Gods fauour, which like ſhowres from heauen, haue watered your Prouinces far & neere. I ſuppoſe, it cannot be vnknown vnto your Lordſhips, what & how much you owe to true Religion. *Religion* it was, which from bloud and tempeſt reduced your State to theſe flouriſhing daies of quietneſſe and Sun-ſhine. *Religion* it was, which firſt begate, then enlarged, and finally eſtabliſhed your proſperity. Let your Lordſhips now conſider with your ſelues, what you will repay vnto Chriſt for all theſe bleſſings. Of your Lordſhips, Chriſt, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, requires this, that for and aboue all his other benefits, you preſerue the Peace which he bequeathed you.

The bond of the publique good is *Religion*,

ligion, and of *Religion*, Peace; those therefore who eyther themselues raise dissentions in the Church, or cherish such as are raised by others, what doe they else intend, but the rooting vp of Peace and Religion; the banishment of Christ out of your coasts? that by iarring of Churchmen, the edification of the Church may be hindered, that the consciences of the multitude be troubled, that wauering and vnstable soules be carried about with euery winde of Doctrine, that the contempt of the Minister bring with it a contempt of his doctrine; till at length these Cockatrice egs bring forth the Basiliske, euen open Impiety and Atheisme. If the Church-affaires be ill managed, all sorts of men, the people, the Priest, yea you your selues shall bee accountable vnto Christ for it. In the people he requires obedience, in the Priest light & truth, that is, knowledge ioyned with holinesse of life. But I know not whether I may impute it eyther to the corruption of this our time, or to the sleights of the Deuill,

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trying all his plots and deuices now in this declining age of the world, that ſome are ariſen, who eyther quite reiecting, or at leaſt too much neglecting purity of life, a garment which beſt of all adornes the Prieſts of God; haue altogether diuerted vpon iangling diſputes, & vnprofitable, yea pernitious contentions. From hence come feruor, and emulation, and oſtentation of Wit; meane while, the building of the Church is interrupted, yea her ruine by vndermining is cloſely practiſed, by ſome that lye in wait to betray your happineſſe.

Awaken and ſtirre vp your ſelues, moſt Noble Lords, eſtabliſh that Peace in the Church, which in the Common-wealth you haue eſtabliſht, yea that Peace, I ſay, which your Lordſhips, by the vigilancy and proweſſe of his Excellency, peaceably, without any noyſe and tumult, but not without the preſent aſſiſtance of God, haue lately attempted, and at length accompliſht, is to bee entertain'd with the ioyfull applauſe of all the Churches, and

to be for euer remembred to your eternall praiſe and glory.

The reformed Churches throughout *Europe*, hauing recouered their liberty, and ſhaken off the heauy yoke of Rome, to ſhew themſelues more thankefull to Chriſt their Redeemer, haue ſeuerally ſet forth confeſſions of their Faith, which though they were many, yet they ſo well agree in one conſent and harmony of mindes, that we may plainely diſcouer, it was the voyce of one onely Spirit, which in ſo many Nations, ſo many Languages deliuered it ſelfe. In this generall concord of other Nations, your conſent did beare a part; your praiſes were in the Goſpell, your authority in the Church much ſet by. But now the neighbor Churches round about enquire, queſtion, and wonder, what it might be which in theſe confeſſions your Church alone quarels with: Againſt which, none of the reſt, ſince the reformation, haue taken exception.

Giue me leaue to aske of you in the Apoſtles words, *Proceeded the Word of God from*

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from you alone? or hath it come onely vnto you? Other Nations and Prouinces preſerue the doctrine of the Goſpell which they haue receiued, whole and ſound, without any alteration and change, and reſolue by Gods helpe, heereafter ſo to continue.

This is that which his Maieſty commends vnto you, euen the vnity and conſent of Confeſſion, the ſpring and originall of reformation; hee commends vnto you the conſent of the Churches, hee requires you, that what forme of Church you haue receiued from your Fathers, you will deliuer ouer to your poſterity; that what Doctrine now theſe twenty or thirty yeeres hath beene publikely taught amongſt you, you preſerue in its former purity; that you ſhut vp all gappe and inlette, which may euery day giue way to innouation, that ſuch treaſures of Chriſt as are committed to your truſt, you preſerue ſafe, without ſuffering them to bee embaſed by admixtion of falſe and counterfeit ſtuffe. Vnto you are committed

the Oracles of God; keepe your Faith vnſpotted, and vndefiled vnto God and Chriſt the Churches King: You are ſeriouſly to take heed, that your Doctors, leauing the ſimplicity of holy Scriptures, diuert not vpon abſtruſe and intricate quirkes; that they ſet not before you ſmoake, in ſtead of ſolid meate. At leaſt, thus much are you carefully to looke to, that thoſe who handle the Word of Life, abſtaine in their Sermons to the people, from thoſe deeper ſpeculations, which poſe the Schooles themſelues, and our ſharpeſt wits, and may with probabilitie on both ſides be diſputed: Leſt the Faith of the Church, which is ſtable and immooueable, ſeeme to be ambiguous and doubtfull; and Scandall creepe in, in place of edifying. Your conſent in Doctrine with other Churches, ſhall bee a ſacrifice of ſweet ſauor vnto God, when one ſoule of ſo many people ſhall cleaue vnto him, and it ſhall bee welcome newes vnto the Churches, and Honourable vnto your Lordſhips, when they ſhall vnderſtand, that

that you hold Brotherly fellowſhip one with another in Chriſt; for God giues not grace and glory to ſuch as walke ſeuerally, euery one in his owne waies, but ſuch as meete together in one Communion of Saints. Factions & part-takings haue wounded the Church on both ſides; on the right hand, and on the left: yet theſe wounds, we doubt not, are curable, if they fall into the hands of a skilfull Phyſician. The true Phyſicke muſt bee adminiſtred by the hand of your authority: as for our labour and induſtry, if it may be any way auaileable to the Churches Peace, it ſhall be euermore ready and at hand: Neyther are we ready onely with our labour and care, but if it ſo pleaſe GOD, in whoſe hands wee are, euen with our deareſt bloud to procure the Churches Peace.

But ſince the Church which Chriſt hath redeemed with his bloud, according to the example of our Lord himſelfe, requires not the bloud of her Miniſters in peace, but in perſecution: by a peculiar fate, (if I may ſo ſpeake) of the Church, it

falls out, that men proue ſtronger vnder the Croſſe, and in affliction, then in times of peace. In times of perſecution they loue not their liues for Chriſt: in time of peace they ſticke not to bandy factions againſt Chriſt. O how difficult is the Churches caſe! what ſtraight conditions is ſhe tied vnto, eyther ſhee ſuffers perſecution with inward peace and ioy of the ſpirit, or ſhe is outwardly at peace with the world, but with inteſtine and ciuill warres.

The Sonnes of God, like little children are moſt eaſily diſciplined vnder the rod; lay the rod by, and preſently they return to ſidings, to faction, to contentions. *But all things turne to the beſt to thoſe that feare God*; and not onely afflictions, but faction and ſchiſme, yea errors and hereſies themſelues; GOD, who is omnipotent, ſhall turne to the good of his Church, that thoſe who are faithfull may be tried, and their faith being tried, may be made manifeſt, and ſuch as loue the Trueth, may not be aſhamed to conquer and triumph ouer their owne errors.

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This minde we heartily wiſh may bee found in our Brethren, that thoſe who are *alwaies ready to fight vnto the death*, for that faith which once was giuen to the Saints, may ſtriue to excell each other in humilitie; not follicitous who ſhall ouercome, but applying all their ſtrength, their skill, their labor, that Truth may haue the victory, the Church Peace, and God the glory.

FINIS.